

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AGR-05 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 STR-04 OPIC-03

CIEP-01 AID-05 /078 W

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R 282044Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 181

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TEGUCIGALPA 2213

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: INITIATION OF BANANA COMMISSION PROCEEDINGS

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 2096

1. AS STATED REFTEL GOH ESTABLISHED COMMISSION TO ADVISE CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR ON GOVERNMENT POLICIES CONCERNING BANANA COMPANIES. MELGAR OFFICIALLY SWORE IN COMMISSION ON AFTERNOON OF MAY 26. THE COMMISSION IS CHARGED WITH PRESENTING A REPORT TO THE CHIEF OF STATE WITHIN 45 DAYS. THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION FOLLOW:

A. ARTURO M. MEDRANO, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHIEF OF STATE;

B. LT. COLONEL MANUEL SUAREZ BENAVIDES, ARMED FORCES;

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C. LT. COLONEL EFRAIN LISANDRO GONZALEZ, MINISTRY

OF GOVERNMENT;

D. ELASIO LOPEZ, MINISTRY OF FINANCE;

E. BENJAMIN VILLANUEVA, MINISTRY OF ECONOMY;

F. ARGELIO CASTRO ACIEGO, MINISTRY OF LABOR;

G. RAFAEL LEONARDO CALLEJAS, MINISTRY OF NATURAL
RESOURCES;

H. LUIS FLORES, SUPERIOR PLANNING COUNCIL;

I. ADALBERTO TENORIO, NATIONAL AGRARIAN INSTITUTE;

J. MARTIN PEREZ, ASSOCIATION OF LAWYERS;

K. OSCAR GALE VARELA, PRESIDENT OF UNITED BRANDS
UNION;

L. NAPOLEON ACEVEDO GRANADOS, PRESIDENT OF STANDARD
FRUIT UNION;

M. EFRAIN DIAZ GALEAS, BANANA PRODUCING COOPERATIVES;

N. ARTURO CASTILLO, INDEPENDENT BANANA PRODUCERS; AND

O. CAMILIO RIVERA GIRON, PRESIDENT OF PRIVATE ENTER-
PRISE COUNCIL.

WVA EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF COMMISSION IS BENJAMIN VILLANUEVA
OF MINISTRY OF ECONOMY. HE PREVIOUSLY STUDIED ECONOMICS OF
STANDARD FRUIT PROBLEM AREA AT ISLETA, AND WILL TEMPORARILY
BE RELIEVED OF HIS DUTIES AS HIGH LEVEL COMMISSION REPRE-
SENTATIVE TO CENTRAL AMERICAN COMMON MARKET NEGOTIATIONS.
(LIC. ROBERTO VALLADARES WILL REPLACE.) VILLANUEVA EXPECTS
TO DIVIDE COMMISSION WORK INTO SEVERAL SUB-AREAS. HE DOUBTS
DEFINITIVE BANANA POLICY CAN BE DEVELOPED IN 45 DAYS, AND
THEREFORE MAY SUGGEST A MORE PERMANENT BODY TO DEAL WITH
THIS IMPORTANT PROBLEM. WE BELIEVE VILLANUEVA IS UNBIASED
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ON THE SEVERAL POLITICAL/ECONOMIC OUTCOMES SUCH AS
NATIONALIZATION BEING SUGGESTED BY PRESS ARTICLES.

3. ACCORDING TO PRESS INTERVIEW ON MAY 27, OSCAR GALE
STRONGLY OPPOSED THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE BANANA COMPANIES.
HE SAID THAT STUDENTS AND OTHERS WHO ARE CALLING FOR SUCH
A MEASURE "HAVE THEIR HEADS IN THE CLOUDS." HE EMPHASIZED
THE COMPLEXITY OF THE BANANA BUSINESS AND POINTED OUT

BANANA UNION MEMBERS ARE VERY WELL PAID COMPARED TO
OTHER WORKERS.
SANCHEZ

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